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## SCHOOL STATISTICS AND MORALS.

The relation of school education to morals is a very old question, but it is always coming up again in some new form, and inasmuch as it is always profitable to inquire how we may make the schools more effective in the direction of moral training, it is wise to have the question in some shape on every new program of this association of Superintendents. Morals include a wide range of virtues, on the one hand bordering on the province of religion and ever overlapping it in the case of such traits of character as hope, faith, and charity,—what the church calls celestial virtues to distinguish them from the secular virtues of prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice.

All kinds of wellwishing and welldoing towards our fellow men come under divine charity or loving kindness. Under faith as a virtue come all those mental convictions which hold us to the theory of the supremacy of good in the universe, and under hope, as the third of the religious virtues, come all such acts or endeavors as we make on the side of Supreme good. Faith is the intellectual virtue, and hope is the virtue of the will, while charity is the virtue of both intellect and will.

The lack of these celestial virtues produces what is called crime, because it sets the intellect and will and the heart against one's fellow men—that is to say, against the social whole.

Very justly then do theologians claim that religious education in this broad sense is the foundation of the institutions of civilization. But it does not necessarily follow that the school should be an appanage of the church, or that anything but secular education should be attempted in it. This will depend upon the further question whether the secular virtues and the secular work of the school are a real auxiliary to the good work of the church. If the habits taught in the school reinforce the spirit of kindness and mutual helpfulness towards one's fellows, if the intellectual studies aid in the spread of Christian doctrines, then the secular school has a moral tendency although it does not take up any direct functions of the church.

I think that the most scientific student of social science will admit that the school is no substitute for the church, and that a nation may possibly exist without a school, but that no nation

can exist without a church. Even the savage tribes with their rudimental civilization have the rudiments of a church, and it occupies a far greater place in savage life than it does in the most advanced civilization. Religion dictates to the Indians of the Pueblos what figures they shall weave into their blankets, and how they shall plant and harvest their corn. But the religion of the highest civilization permits and encourages the conquest of nature by science and art, and separates one after the other the cardinal institutions—family, civil society, and the state—from the direct control of the church, and emancipates them from its authority. Thus Christianity is forever narrowing the circle of superstition and increasing the realm of enlightenment.

Right here, however, comes in the first appeal to statistics, and the first attack and defense of the school on the line of moral influence. It is supposed on the one hand that purely secular instruction in ideas and habits must be anti-religious and consequently tend toward vice and crime. On the other hand it is claimed that purely secular instruction reinforces religion and exerts an influence repressive of vice and crime, although it does not include any theologic teaching. Statistics are collated to show that the majority of criminals in our jails have attended school for a longer or shorter period. Statistics are likewise quoted to show that those States which have the oldest and most efficient school systems have the largest number of criminals in their jails and state prisons. Assertions are made that education merely changes the character of the crime, for example from robbery and theft, the crimes of the illiterate, to forgery and embezzlement or breach of trust, which are the crimes of those who have had school education. The returns of prisons and jails have been often studied with a view to get the facts in these particulars. Most teachers are familiar with the collation of statistics made on the census returns of 1870 by E. D. Mansfield, and published in General Eaton's Report of the Bureau of Education for 1872. The returns from prisons and jails of seventeen States, fourteen of which were Western or Middle States, gave an aggregate of 110,538 prisoners of whom 27,581, or almost exactly twenty-five per cent., were illiterate or not able to write.

The fact that three quarters of all the prisoners could read and write, and had had some schooling, looked serious enough to challenge the good influence claimed for the schools. If school edu-

cation is adverse to crime, why should not the statistics show that a majority of the prisoners are illiterate ?

At this point the subject was taken up by those who understood arithmetic, and the question was modified so as to ask whether a given number of illiterates in the population furnished as many criminals as the same number of persons who could read and write. Put in this shape, the answer was intelligible.

The illiteracy of the population in the seventeen States which furnished the twenty-five per cent. of illiterate criminals was about four per cent., according to the census of 1870. These four per cent. of the population furnished twenty-five per cent. of the criminals, and the ninety-six per cent. who could read and write furnished only seventy-five per cent. If one per cent. of the illiterates had furnished only one per cent of the criminals, it would appear that education made no difference in regard to crime. But the illiterates furnished more than six times their quota, while those who could read and write furnished one-fifth less than their quota, and the ratio of the two was one to eight. A thousand illiterates on an average furnished eight times as many prisoners as the same number who could read and write.

This result worked out with much uniformity where the same degree of accuracy in keeping statistics prevailed. The very small quotas of illiterates in Iowa, Kansas, and Minnesota gave more than eight times their share of criminals while the three Southern States included in the seventeen were reported as having twenty-two per cent. of illiterates in the population, and as having sixty per cent. of illiterate criminals, thus showing the illiterates to have five and one-third times their proper share of criminals.

Within the past ten years many of the jails and reformatories have published comparative tables showing the results for a term of years during which accurate records have been kept. These are, of course, more valuable than the returns for any single year, because the inequalities and unusual conditions get eliminated. In 1887, for instance, the jail at Detroit gave a summary for twenty-five years showing an aggregate of 40,338 committals, of whom 28,652 could read and write, and 11,686 who could not write. This gives eight times the quota of criminals to the illiterates, because in the total population of the State there were less than five percentum of illiterates.

To be mentioned as prominent among institutions keeping and publishing accurate and discriminating records in these matters are the Illinois penitentiary at Joliet, the Elmira Reformatory of New York, the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, (the 31st annual report) and the New York Juvenile Asylum.

The main point in the interpretation of criminal statistics is to consider the ratio between the number of criminals furnished by a given number of illiterates as compared with a like number who can read and write. We must consider not only the numerators but also the denominators of our fractions in order to get at the true value.

But there are other important items which some future census taker will give us—for example, the number of persons who can read and write but who are so poorly equipped as to be very ignorant. In the statistics taken in the better class of our jails and prisons a good classification of prisoners prevails. In 1870 the illiterate and the very deficient amounted to sixty per cent. of the prisoners according to the returns from New York and Pennsylvania ; to fifty per cent. in those from Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, and California ; to seventy-five per cent. in those from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin ; to eighty-five per cent. in those of Maryland, Kentucky, and South Carolina.

Many keep careful statistics in regard to previous condition of industry, the character of parents, the time of leaving home, the state of health. A large proportion of criminals are orphans, or have left home at a tender age. Many have been brought up by criminal parents, very many have never learned how to work at an honest and honorable occupation.

The question of the prevention and cure of crime is a very complicated one, having many coöperating causes besides that of defect of schooling. But that schooling is a very powerful influence is made probable by these statistics, and it is made certain by considering its nature.

Stated in a word, every school demands good behavior, and most teachers succeed in securing it. Good behavior means respect for the rights of others and regularity, punctuality, self-restraint, and industry at mastering the thought, or at least memorizing the words, of learned and scientific men. It is this requirement of good behavior that secures the moral influence of the school. It is questionable whether set moral lessons produce the desired

effect. But obedience to the rules of good order insures moral habits.

This, of course, develops power of self-control. It gives power of inhibiting mere natural impulses and passions, and of choosing higher motives. Even selfish motives become purified as they become more general in their scope and bearing, and a perfectly wise selfishness would adopt the golden rule.

To those who have objected to secular education as tending to fill our jails with educated criminals, the defenders of the schools have pointed significantly to the statistics of religious education among criminals, which are beginning to be kept in a great number of jails and prisons. For instance, in the Detroit jail, in the twenty-five years that were reported, 37,089 out of 40,838 were reported as having religious training, against 2,249 who had had none. As regards religious influences: fifteen had been under Mormon training, sixty-nine under Jewish, and the remaining 37,000 about equally under Protestant and Roman Catholic training.

In the Elmira Reformatory in twelve years those reported as having no religious training were only seven per cent., the Hebrew at five per cent., the Protestant at forty-two per cent., and the Catholic at forty-six per cent.

In the reports from two hundred jails in the United States with about 55,000 prisoners last year\* over one-half reported religious training of prisoners—10,376 had no religious training; 9,934 had Protestant; 163 had Jewish; 9,115 had Catholic training.

I quote these facts to show how statistics may mislead a person who does not consider the qualitative side as well as the quantitative side.

It would be preposterous to think that the training of the church or the Sunday school could tend towards the production of criminals. The doctrine of self-sacrifice for others, the example of the Son of God who suffered,—the perfect for the imperfect—no one can conceive a more powerful lesson to restrain the youth from a criminal career. The Jewish instruction in the ten commandments would produce righteousness instead of crime. And yet the neophyte in statistics would say that the ninety-two per cent. of criminals in Detroit who had received religious instruction made a bad showing for religious education. But he would say this only because he is a neophyte, and omitted his de-

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\*In reply to a circular of inquiry sent out by the Bureau of Education.

nominator like the bad arithmeticians who have been decrying public education in the magazines and reviews, and comparing numerators without a glance at their denominators.

The religious statistics would read, when the denominators are supplied, somewhat as follows : The ninety-two per cent. of criminals who have had some religious instruction have been furnished by the ninety-eight or ninety-nine per cent. of the whole population who have been under religious instruction, while the eight per cent. of criminals without previous religious teaching, represent the one or two per cent. of their class in Michigan. And none of the criminals came there through religious teaching, but because they neglected its counsels.

The attack on school education as increasing the number of convicted criminals—an increase proved by the returns from the different States—has brought forward a new phase of the question.

Educators will remember the brilliant attack, led by Richard Grant White, some years ago, in the *North American Review*, and recently an article in the *Popular Science Monthly* by Mr. Reece. These have been replied to, the former by Dr. Philbrick in the *North American Review* and by Prof. B. F. Tweed in a valuable pamphlet ; that of Mr. Reece was well answered by Mr. H. H. Clayton, who quoted the interesting analyses of criminal records in Massachusetts published by Mr. David C. Torrey in *Lend a Hand* for January, 1890.

Massachusetts, it was said, committed to its jails and prisons only 8,761 persons in 1850 while in 1885 it committed 26,651 or nearly three times as many. In 1850 less than nine persons in one thousand, in 1885 nearly fourteen. This evidently demanded a qualitative inquiry : What crimes are on the increase ? Mr. Torrey classified them first under two heads, and found that the crimes against person and property were on an average from 1865 to 1870, one to 301 inhabitants, while from 1880 to 1885 they were one to 436—thus showing a decrease in serious crimes of forty-four per cent. The second heading was commitments for crimes against order and decency, and these had increased largely.

Investigating further into these crimes against order and decency, Mr. Torrey found that they were mostly cases of drunkenness. The commitments for drunkenness in 1850 were only 3,341, while in 1885 they had risen to 18,701. The commitments for all other crimes than drunkenness in 1850 amounted to one

for 183 inhabitants, and in 1885 to only one for 244 inhabitants. The average from 1850 to 1865 was one to 174 inhabitants, while the average from 1870 to 1885 was one to 241 inhabitants for other crimes than drunkenness.

This showing completely turned the tables on that class of sensational or emotional writers who deal with what I call hysterical statistics. Person and property have become more safe in Massachusetts. Between 1860 and 1885 commitments for crimes against them decreased forty-four per cent., allowing for increase of population ;—the decrease was greatest in crimes against property, but there was a decided decrease of crimes against person. But while person and property have become safer in twenty-five years, drunkenness is not nearly so safe ; the prisons and jails are crowded with intemperate people who were formerly allowed to go unmolested through the streets and country roads.

The fact that person and property have become more secure on the whole is very significant when we consider the fact that the numerous cities of Massachusetts afford hiding places for burglars who raid on the small villages of the rural part of the State by night and escape to the city by railroad before morning. Any species of crime that goes unpunished tends to increase, and to multiply criminals. Hence the rural districts in the vicinity of the large cities of the Middle and Eastern States suffer more from this species of marauding than any other portion of the United States, not even excepting the border land.

Of the secular virtues, justice is particularly concerned in this matter of crime. It has two phases, honesty and truth speaking, that are particularly cultivated in good schools. Temperance is a virtue which the school helps to some extent. Fortitude is developed by self-restraint in the school. Prudence or Providence is the special virtue of thrift, and the school nurtures this by increasing intelligence and skill in productive industry.

On the question of the promotion of these virtues by the school, I desire to cite the statistics of thrift in favor of the State that gives the largest amount of schooling to each inhabitant.

To the person who has not become familiar with the facts it is surprising to learn that the total number of years' schooling that each person on an average is getting in the United States is only four and three-tenths, nearly four years of this being furnished by public, and less than six-tenths of a year by the private



schools. But the amount that Massachusetts is giving is six years and eighty-six hundredths, or two and a half years more than the general average. There are only five States that give over six years on an average to their whole population—these are: first, Massachusetts, next, New York, third, Connecticut, fourth, Ohio, fifth, Rhode Island. As the course of study in the elementary school is only eight years, from the age of six to that of fourteen, it is seen that the total average schooling for a citizen of this nation is only sufficient to take him through a primary school with a four years' course. I quote these statistics to point out a connection between education and industry.

The total production of the labor of the people of the United States for 1880 was about forty cents apiece for each man, woman, and child per day ; but the production of Massachusetts with its average of seven years of schooling for each inhabitant was nearly double that of the average for each inhabitant of the whole Nation. I have made on different bases three estimates, using data given by Col. C. D. Wright in his census of the State for 1885. The lowest estimate gives sixty-eight per cent. more than the national average, the second, eighty-four per cent., the third, exactly one hundred per cent. The population of Massachusetts is four per cent., its productions eight per cent., of the whole nation. Who that looks at modern productive industry, and considers how much of it is due to machinery, and considers further the dependence of machinery for its management on alert and educated intelligence can fail to see the relation of the schools of Massachusetts to its phenomenal production of the items of wealth ?

The virtue of prudence or productive industry insures the existence of other virtues such as temperance and honesty. For the fact that the people of a State have arrived at the stage of political conscience at which they attack not only the crime but also its source in such vices as intemperance, implies an advance also in regard to many virtues. And cannot the well kept schools claim a large share in producing these favorable moral conditions ?

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